



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: DECEMBER 6, 2004

ITEM NUMBER:

**SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN SCREENING REQUEST GPS-04-03
675 ANTON BOULEVARD**

DATE: NOVEMBER 18, 2004

FROM: PLANNING DIVISION/DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

PRESENTATION BY: CLAIRE L. FLYNN, AICP, ASSOC. PLANNER

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: CLAIRE L. FLYNN, AICP, ASSOC. PLANNER
(714) 754-5278**

RECOMMENDATION

Accept proposed General Plan amendment screening request for processing.

BACKGROUND

On November 1, 2004, the applicant submitted a General Plan amendment screening request to allow a residential condominium project within Two Town Center. Pursuant to the City's submittal deadlines for applications received in Fall 2004, this request was scheduled for the December 6th Council meeting.

ANALYSIS

Project Site

Two Town Center is a 6.26 acre subarea of South Coast Plaza Town Center and is bounded by Anton Boulevard (north), Interstate 405 (south), Bristol Street (west), and Avenue of the Arts (east). The site is designated Cultural Arts Center by the General Plan and zoned Town Center (TC). Two Town Center is also located in the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan area. A vicinity map is provided as Attachment 1.

Project Description

CommonWealth Capital Management, on behalf of FSP Two Town Center, LLP, is proposing a General Plan amendment for a proposed residential condominium (owner-occupied) building within Two Town Center. The condominium building is still in its conceptual stages, and a precise location has not been identified. The proposed condominium building is anticipated to complement the existing cultural arts, office, and commercial uses within Two Town Center. Additionally, the building's trip generation would neither exceed the circulation system capacity, nor would its height exceed the maximum building height of 315 feet allowed for South Coast Plaza Town Center. The

project will also involve an amendment to the Two Town Center Master Plan, North Costa Mesa Specific Plan, and Zoning Code.

The condominium building is inspired by current demand for upscale residential condominiums in urban centers. Specifically, this project will incorporate key features of two proposed luxury residential towers at “Marquee at Park Place” in Irvine. Similar to the Marquee buildings in Irvine, the proposed condominium building within Two Town Center will contain resident amenities (e.g. pool, indoor patio areas, and fitness/recreational facilities) and will also showcase views of the surrounding area. Furthermore, as with the Marquee buildings in Irvine, the proposed project will be the first of its kind in Costa Mesa and is expected to meet growing demand from a high-end, luxury-housing market while not exceeding the circulation system’s capacity.

General Plan Screening Criteria

City Council Policy 500-2 establishes a procedure for processing privately initiated General Plan amendments. This procedure involves a City Council screening of these requests prior to their acceptance for formal processing. The policy includes three criteria for accepting requests and two criteria for rejecting requests. The acceptance criteria are as follows:

1. A General Plan amendment is necessary to resolve inconsistency between the General Plan designation and zoning of a parcel.
2. A General Plan amendment is necessary to provide a uniform land use designation on a single parcel.
3. A General Plan amendment would result in decreased traffic impacts from the property.

The criteria for rejecting an application are as follows:

1. The request applies to a single small lot or a small area, especially if the change would make the property inconsistent with surrounding properties.
2. The property is located in the Redevelopment Area and requires action by the Redevelopment Agency to amend the Redevelopment Plan.

In addition to the above criteria, the policy also states that no request shall be accepted that would increase the overall, citywide development cap. It does, however, allow amendments that would result in development exchanges or transfers to be considered. The policy also acknowledges that these criteria are only guidelines and City Council may accept an application which does not meet the criteria if it finds there are overriding reasons to do so.

Traffic Analysis

Since the project is still at its conceptual planning stages, detailed traffic analysis will be conducted with the project-specific environmental review. In consultation with the City Engineer, the traffic analysis will include, but not be limited to, the following information:

- Proposed trip budgets for buildout of the Two Town Center Master Plan.
- Pedestrian and vehicle circulation plan.
- Comparison of directional trip budgets for residential versus commercial uses.
- Analysis of any increased traffic in relation to existing and projected traffic levels, as previously studied in the SCPTC Program EIR.
- Trip generation characteristics of residential condominiums in mixed-use zones.

Justification for Acceptance of Screening Request

Staff recommends acceptance of the General Plan screening request for the following reasons:

- *Achieves General Plan Housing Element Goal HOU-3.* The purpose of the three General Plan acceptance criteria is to provide guidelines to screen General Plan amendment requests. While the proposed project does not strictly satisfy these specified criteria, it would achieve an important Housing Element goal by supplementing a diverse housing supply. It would meet the housing needs of the high-income segments of the community at a level no greater than which can be supported by planned infrastructure improvements.
- *Reinforces TAD Plan by promoting Costa Mesa's image as "City of the Arts."* Through landscaping, public street amenities, and signage, the Theater Arts District (TAD) Plan details a strategy to enhance the City's image. The applicant states that the project's modern design is responsive to the immediate cultural context as well as consistent with the quality, identity, and scale of SCPTC. To foster this image of sophistication, the proposed condominium building takes its inspiration from proposed luxury residential towers at Marquee at Park Place in Irvine. Similar to the Marquee building in Irvine, the proposed condominium building within Two Town Center will contain resident amenities and showcase views of the Theater Arts District and surrounding area.
- *Helps balance the City's jobs/housing ratio.* The South Coast Plaza Program Environmental Impact Report projected employment growth from this area would grow at a faster pace than housing development, and therefore, it would adversely impact housing availability. The proposed project will create new housing which would help balance the City's jobs/housing ratio. The proposed project will target a population including performing artists, art industry professionals/patrons, and cultural art investors. Furthermore, as with the Marquee at Park Place buildings in Irvine, the proposed project will be the first of its kind in Costa Mesa and is expected to meet the demand from a high-end housing market.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

City Council has the following alternatives available for consideration:

1. Accept the screening request for processing. Pursuant to Council Policy 500-2, Council may acknowledge that the General Plan screening criteria are only guidelines and that City Council may accept an application that does not meet the criteria based on other considerations. Since the project promotes the City of Arts image and helps balance the City's jobs/housing, staff recommends acceptance of the application for processing. Detailed environmental analysis (i.e. traffic, noise, air quality studies) will be required to identify any impacts of the proposed condominium building.
2. Deny the screening request. Denial of this request would maintain the exclusion of residential uses in the Cultural Arts Center designation.

FISCAL REVIEW

Fiscal review is not required for this item.

LEGAL REVIEW

Legal review is not required for this item.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends acceptance of the proposed General Plan amendment for processing and additional analysis. The proposed residential condominium building within Two Town Center achieves the following: (a) satisfies an important housing goal for diverse housing types, (b) promotes City's image as City of the Arts, and (c) helps balance the City jobs/housing ratio. While project specific environmental analysis is required, the condominium building is anticipated to be within the circulation system's capacity and supported by planned infrastructure improvements.

If accepted and contingent upon the timely submittal of a completed planning application and necessary environmental documentation, the General Plan amendment will be scheduled for Planning Commission review as early as February 2005 and would be forwarded for City Council consideration in March 2005. Amendments to the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan, Two Town Center Master Plan, and Zoning Code will be processed currently with the General Plan amendment application.

It is important to note that acceptance of this screening request does not set precedent for approval, but does allow the opportunity to review the request and it's relative merits and compatibility in greater detail prior to final action.



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Principal Planner



DONALD D. LAMM, AICP
Deputy City Mgr. – Dev. Svs. Director


















- Attachments:
1. General Plan Map
 2. Aerial Photograph of Two Town Center
 3. Applicant's Letter of Justification

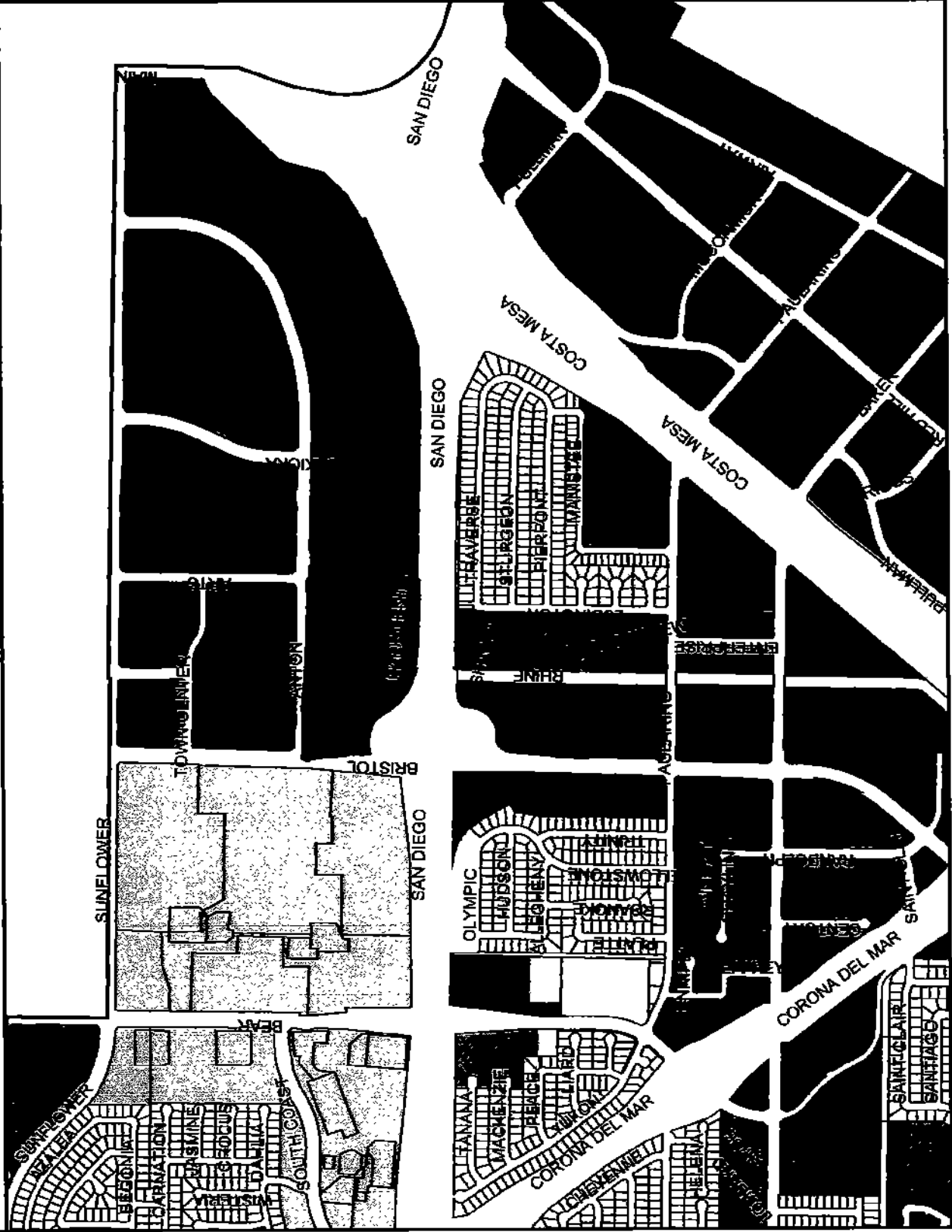
cc: City Manager
Assistant City Manager
City Attorney
Public Services Director
City Clerk
Staff (4)
File (2)

John Krappman, Vice President
Commonwealth Partners
633 West Fifth Street, 72nd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90071

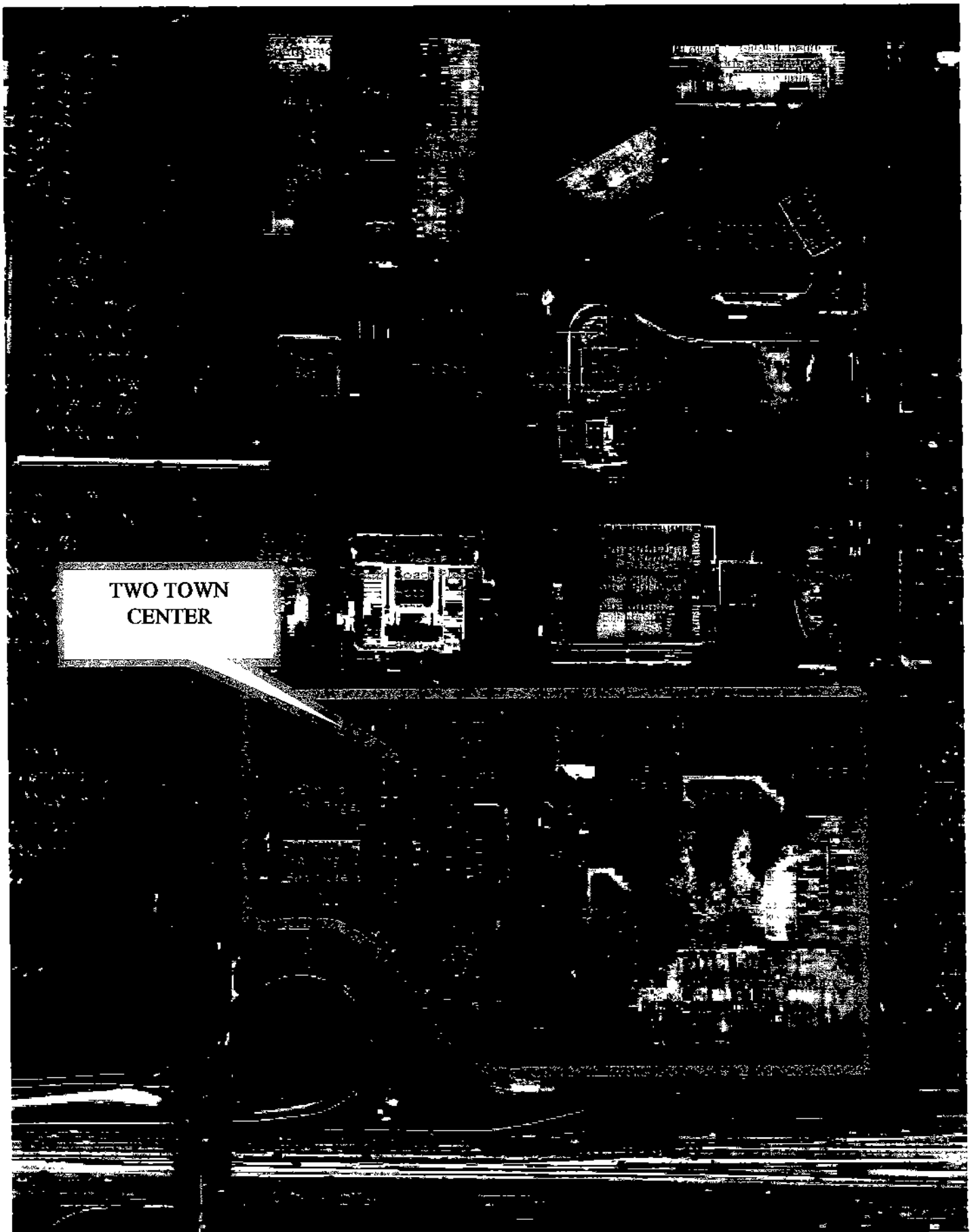
File: 120604GPS0403	Date: 111904	Time: 245p.m.
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General Plan Map

Legend	
	Street Names
	Parcel Lines
	City Boundary
	General Plan
	Other
	Cultural Arts Center
	Commercial Center
	Commercial Residential
	Parkgrounds
	Golf Course
	General Commercial
	High Density Residential
	Industrial Park
	Low Density Residential
	Light Industrial
	Medium Density Residential
	Neighborhood Commercial
	Public/Institutional
	Regional Commercial
	Urban Center Commercial



Two Town Center (Pacific Arts Plaza)



COMMONWEALTH PARTNERS, LLC

November 1, 2004

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Ms. Kimberly Brandt
City of Costa Mesa
77 Fair Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92628-1200

Re: Initial Screening Application


Dear Ms. Brandt:

This letter will serve as CWP Capital Management's (as agent for FSP – Two Town Center, LLC) formal request for city review of the enclosed General Plan Screening application.

Our request is to amend the City of Costa Mesa's General Plan to allow for the addition of residential uses within the Town Center (TC) zoning. We are aware that a General Plan Amendment (GPA) and Specific Plan Amendment (SPA) will be required subsequent to the initial screening process. The Town Center zoning currently provides for a variety of uses, including cultural arts, commercial office, retail, and hotel.

CWP Capital Management and our partner, CalPERS, are strong proponents of Smart Growth principles. Adding residential uses to the Town Center area will further support the integration of mixed land uses into the area, thereby providing people with more choices in housing, transportation, shopping, work, and entertainment. By directing growth toward an area with adequate infrastructure and resources, we can further enhance the Town Center area as a great place to live, work, learn, and play.

Sincerely,



John Krappman
Vice President

JAK/njs

Enclosures